

POST 2006 INITIATIVE

PROGRESS REPORT

WORKING GROUP: Energy Assistance

DATE: 7/16/04

LOCATION: NICOR Bloomington

I ATTENDEES:

Representatives of ICC, IEA, Ameren, Commonwealth Edison, Nicor, Peoples, Illinois Power, Mt. Carmel, MidAmerican Energy, IL Attorney General (AG), IL Public Aid (PA), IL Natural Resources (DNR), IL Dept of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO), IL Industrial Electric Consumers (IIEC), Giordano/Trizec et al, IL Community Action Assn, Community Energy Cooperative & Low Income Advocacy Project attended, twenty-one in person and six by phone hookup to AG's Chicago office. A complete log is available from Conveners if desired.

II a ISSUES DISCUSSED FROM FINAL ISSUES LIST

Issue 90 – “How should state energy assistance programs be provided for low-income customers who cannot afford to pay just and reasonable rates?” No additional discussion was held on this Issue, but two status updates were given.

- Rick Fiddymment & David Baker of DNR will have the additional information requested re costs of a year-round heating/cooling energy assistance program for the July 30 meeting.
- John Colgan of IL Community Action Assn has Dave Reinbolt of the Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy scheduled to present information on the Ohio percentage-of-income energy assistance program to our July 30 meeting.

Issue 91 – “Is the current surcharge level adequate for energy assistance?”

- Anthony Star of Community Energy Cooperative reported that Competitive Issues Working Group had discussed energy assistance issues at their last meeting and has no desire to propose changes from their work group to the current supplemental customer charge method.
- Extensive discussion was held regarding the voluntary participation aspect for municipal and cooperative electric utilities in the application of the supplemental charge and consequently in receiving additional state LIHEAP funds. It was recognized that programs to increase their participation is beyond the scope of this work group, but that the participation of representatives of those organizations at the July 30 meeting would be beneficial.
- DNR presented an Illinois map showing participation in LIHEAP by county. They will attempt to make this available in electronic format for EAWG members.
- There was some discussion regarding whether the current surcharge for Renewable Energy Resources and Coal Technology Development Assistance Charge should be considered by EAWG as part of this Issue or just the Energy Assistance Charge for the Supplemental Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund. Members who attend other working groups indicated that Procurement, Rates and Competitive Issues working groups have all discussed some aspect of renewable energy and energy efficiency, but offered no indication that another working group had taken ownership. Co-conveners agreed to raise this issue at the next convener's joint meeting.

Issue 92 – Group agreed with decision made at last meeting that this Issue has been “rolled into” Issues 90 & 91 and does not need addressed further.

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Issue 93 – “Is there a role for economic development “rates” in a post-transition marketplace? If so, should tariffed non-competitive energy services offered by utilities be the vehicle, or can the State implement economic development programs through the competitive sector as well?”

- EAWG members believe that economic development rates may be best addressed by the Rates Working Group as opposed to Energy Assistance Working Group. Co-conveners will discuss with RWG convener to see if they are in agreement.

Additional Issue – “What, if any, will be the effect on state energy assistance programs of the method(s) of procuring power used in the Post 2006 energy environment?”

- Sheila Owens of Commonwealth Edison will have research completed by July 30 meeting on how other deregulated states might have addressed this issue.
- Some discussion was held on aggregation of the energy assistance class for procurement bids and that Utility Service Obligations Working Group was considering this as part of their Provider of Last Resort (POLR) discussions.

II b OTHER ISSUES DISCUSSED

- Anti-trust guidelines in effect for the meeting were referenced.
- Reviewed Revised Progress Report from June 25 meeting and approved the one modification discussed at our last meeting. Reviewed Progress Report from July 9 with no concerns expressed, but noted that proper name for the Ohio group referenced in the report is “Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy”.
- Process Issues. Discussed that Commissioner O’Connell-Diaz and ICC Staff were developing a format for the final report of working groups and would be shared as soon as available.
- Reviewed dates for remaining meetings, all on Fridays from 11 am – 1 pm.
 - July 30 & August 6– Chicago – ICC main hearing room
 - August 13 – Springfield – Ameren
 - Possible meetings on 8/20 & 8/27

III PRESENTERS - None

IV PRESENTATION SUMMARIES - None

V CONCLUSIONS REACHED ISSUE:

VI COMMENTS – None

VII TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

Three presentations as noted above – Ohio percentage-of-income plan, year-round heating/cooling program cost estimates and whether other deregulated states’ energy assistance programs were impacted by energy procurement methods.

VIII TIME AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING

Friday, July 30 at ICC Chicago office from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. Phone connection to ICC Springfield office.

Jim Monk/Jon Carls, Co-Conveners